

evenings, priesthood quorum or Relief Society classes, and training in ward, stake, and regional welfare committees.

"Providing in the Lord's way for ourselves and others is a sign of the true Church and evidence that we are disciples of Christ," the new guidebook states. "Church leaders should teach and testify of the principles contained in this leader's guide by precept, by personal example, and by ensuring that the cries of the poor and needy do not go unheeded."

A supplement to the leader's guide, *Church Welfare Resources*, was also introduced and distributed to leaders in the United States and Canada to explain the appropriate use of Church welfare resources in those countries. □

Policies and Announcements

In a May 1991 letter sent to all General Authorities and area, regional, and local leaders, the First Presidency issued the following guideline relating to Church service missionaries:

"Church service missionaries serving at home, whether full- or part-time, can be called for six-, twelve-, or eighteen-month assignments. Full-time Church service missionaries serving away from home can be called for twelve or eighteen months. The length of recommended service for those serving at home should be noted by the bishop on the Recommendation for Church Service or on the Missionary Recommendation Form for those serving away from home." □

Mormon Miracle Pageant Celebrates Silver Anniversary

Twenty-five years ago, the Mormon Miracle Pageant had its debut performance at the Sanpete County Fairgrounds in central Utah. Only a few local Church members attended. This year, some 150,000 visitors will attend the eight performances presented on the hill below the Manti Temple.

The pageant had its beginnings in the 1940s in a lecture Grace Johnson, an Ephraim, Utah, native, presented to Kiwanis and Rotary clubs throughout the eastern United States. She titled her dramatic presentation "The Mormon Miracle," focusing on the Restoration and the LDS exodus from Nauvoo to Utah. When the tour was over, she shelved the lecture, thinking that was the last time she would deliver it.

But in 1947 she was

asked to present it at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City to help celebrate the centennial of the arrival in Utah of the Mormon pioneers.

Subsequent presentations included trips to several western states.

In 1950, Deseret Book Company published the dramatic presentation in book form, and it was performed by both large and small groups over the next decade and a half. In 1964, Brigham Young University presented it with a speaking cast of narrators accompanied by the university's symphony orchestra and a 75-voice choir.

Three years later, in 1967, Sister Johnson's stake presidency asked her to turn "The Mormon Miracle" into a stage production for their July 24 celebration. The Manti pageant was performed that first time at the county fairgrounds. It has been performed every year since then on the Manti Temple grounds.

Many consider the first performance of the Mormon Miracle Pageant a miracle itself. The evening of the performance, clouds rolled across the valley, thunder rumbled, lightning flashed, and rain turned the fairgrounds into a stage of mud.

However, when the invocation was offered, the rain stopped until the performance was over.

Today, rain or shine, Manti and its surrounding communities are filled to capacity during the eight days the pageant is presented. Don Tibbs, chairman of the pageant's anniversary committee, remembers the night when a General Authority was staying in his guest room, an out-of-town family was sleeping on his basement floor, a Boy Scout troop was camped on his front lawn, and thirty visitors from Guatemala were sleeping in tents in his backyard.

"You had to make an appointment to wash your face," he recalls, smiling.

Pageant attendance has grown steadily through the years. Two thousand people attended the pageant's first performance in 1967. By 1970, forty thousand people were attending its eight performances.

In 1970, a professional sound track featuring the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and the Mormon Youth Symphony and Chorus was incorporated so that the steadily increasing audience could hear every word. Macksene Smith Rux, pageant director for many years, modified and expanded the script.

This year will mark the last presentation of the production familiar to the hundreds of thousands who have attended it since 1970. The Manti Utah Stake, sponsor of the pageant, has announced that a new script will be written for future performances.

Performances this year will be held on the evenings of July 11-13 and 16-20, beginning at dusk. □



In a scene from the pageant, a family pushes their handcart westward.

are invited to put down the nets as he bids us," Elder Hanks added. It does not matter that we are tired or haven't been particularly successful before; power to direct the harvest is his.

Elder Jack H. Goasland of the Seventy, Young Men General President, was the first speaker of the fireside. "The priesthood you hold is indeed a worldwide brotherhood," knowing no language or cultural barriers, he said. As part of that brotherhood, he introduced three Aaronic Priesthood holders whose talks had been videotaped in their home areas. They were Derek Ryan, a deacon from Ireland; Erickson B. Ballados, a teacher from the Philippines; and Daniel Borba, a priest from Brazil. Each spoke on service through the priesthood, and on preparation for greater service in life.

A section of the Church video production *Putting the Melchizedek Priesthood to Work* was also shown during the fireside, indicating ways in which priesthood holders can reach out to members who need strengthening. □

Tornado Strikes Kansas, Earthquake Shakes Costa Rica

Two Latter-day Saint families lost their homes, but none were injured when a tornado cut a swath across the Wichita, Kansas, area on April 25.

It was reported that the tornado stayed on the ground for seventy miles,

with winds that reached as high as 250 miles per hour. At least twenty-two people were killed, and more than fifteen hundred were left homeless.

The two LDS families who lost their homes lived on McConnell Air Force Base, and the United States Air Force is providing housing for them. But local members helped meet their immediate needs for food and some items of clothing.

"Members have been very responsive to the calls for community assistance," said Rusty Butler, Wichita Kansas Stake public affairs director.

Elsewhere, all members and missionaries were safe after an earthquake struck Costa Rica in Central America on April 23. One member suffered a minor injury during cleanup efforts.

A number of homes belonging to members were damaged. The road between the nation's capital, San Jose, and Puerto Limon was severed. It was reported that the land was raised by one and one-half meters (nearly five feet) in the quake, leaving the docks in the port far from the water. Piers will have to be extended before the port can function again. □

Leader's Guide to Welfare Released

The release of a new leader's guide to welfare marks a landmark event for the Church—resource material being released simultaneously in nineteen different languages.

"A miracle of sorts has



The welfare guide was released in nineteen languages simultaneously.

enabled us for the first time, to my knowledge, to introduce in final printed form, in the many languages which you use, the new publication," President Thomas S. Monson, Second Counselor in the First Presidency, told a group of regional representatives gathered for April general conference. "In these tumultuous times in which we live, we must pursue anew our learning and our teaching of divinely given welfare principles."

The new guide, *Providing in the Lord's Way: A Leader's Guide to Welfare*, has been several years in production. The emphasis in the new guide is that members of the Church can live according to welfare principles wherever they live and whether or not they have any physical facilities. The guide focuses on scriptures and doctrine relating to welfare.

According to the guide, "a storehouse is established the moment faithful members give to the bishop of their time, talents, skills, compassion, materials, and financial means in caring for the poor and in building up the kingdom of God on earth."

Also in the new guide are quotes from Church leaders

and pictures illustrating welfare principles.

The new guide is designed for use by Area Presidencies, regional representatives, directors for temporal affairs, area welfare directors, and all members of stake and ward welfare committees. The guide is divided into three main sections. The first section explains the way the Lord has revealed for his Saints to care for themselves and the poor and needy. Part two discusses principles of the gospel that apply to welfare and the welfare responsibilities of each member of the Church. Part three explains responsibilities of Church leaders in providing Church welfare assistance.

In area training meetings and regional welfare committee meetings during 1991, stake presidents throughout the Church will receive instructions on the use and policy implications of the new welfare manual.

In turn, local leaders will be instructed to teach the principles and responsibilities found in the first two sections to the leaders and members under their jurisdiction. Those sections are designed to be used for lessons in family home